

KILLED SIX HOWARDS.

The Leader of the Turners Inflicts Serious Loss Upon the Opposite Faction.

Judge Lewis Will Stay In the Fight Until the Howards are Conquered.

The Story of the Feud as Told by the Leaders of the Two Factions—A County Involved.

LOUISVILLE, Nov. 1.—A special to the Courier-Journal from Pineville, Ky., says: News reached here to-night that Judge Lewis came up with the Howard gang yesterday on Martin's Fork and killed six of them without losing a man. Judge Lewis is determined not to quit the chase until Howard and his gang are all killed or driven from the country. Both parties are being reinforced daily and more bloodshed is expected. The best citizens of Harlan county are joining Lewis' forces.

Signed statements of Wilkerson Howard, E. J. Howard and George O. Turner in regard to the Harlan county feud were secured. Each gives his account of the causes and progress of the vendetta.

With her son Howard is a cousin of Wilkerson Howard, the leader of his faction. The document bearing his signature is:

The Howard family is very much the largest in the county. There are three branches, and they are probably the most largely connected in the state. Most of them occupy positions of trust, both here and in other sections of Kentucky. Half the population or more are named Howard. The Howards were the first settlers of Harlan county. Samuel Howard, Sr., a revolutionary soldier, came here and made large surveys in 1800. These surveys included the present town of Harlan Court House. His son, John N. Howard, was the first judge in Harlan county. Another son, of Wilkerson Howard, Sr., was the first white child born in the county. John N. Howard donated the ground to the county where the present court house stands in 1825. Next year he was appointed judge, and instructed the first grand jury in Harlan county.

Samuel Howard came to this county from Maryland, and his father came from England. It is only justice to the family to say a large majority of the Howards deeply regret this terrible feud, which blackens our name and the name of the county and state, and that the best part and majority of the name have taken no part in it. On the contrary, they are peaceful citizens. The Howards have never lost a life in the feud, though several have been wounded.

E. J. Howard, who follows Wilkerson Howard gives the following account of the origin of the feud:

"Bob Turner, several others and myself were playing cards. Turner and I had been on a trade for revolvers, and a few unpleasant remarks followed, but all passed off. Turner lay down in the room to take a nap and another of the crowd, named Little, thought to play him a joke. Little struck a match to light his pipe and then touched the fire to Turner's hand. This woke Turner, and he asked who did it. He was told I did. More hot words passed between us, and I went off, got a musket loaded with fox shot, and returned. In the fight that followed I shot Bob Turner, and his death resulted. I was tried and acquitted on the ground of self-defense.

A short time after this Will Turner, Bob's brother, tried to kill me. He came to my house, four miles below town on the Cumberland river, walked into the house, pulled his pistol and shot at me without saying a word. My wife and children and mother-in-law and myself were sitting around the fireplace. The bullet intended for me missed its mark, but ploughed its way across my mother-in-law's forehead. Her wound was not serious. I jumped up, got a pistol and grappled him. In the scuffle both our pistols were fired several times and Turner was shot in the arm.

Owing to the darkness he made his escape. I had several holes in my clothes, but was not hurt. This assault on me and shooting of my mother-in-law set public opinion against Will Turner, and he went to Texas and remained some time. When he returned his father sent us word that his "bull dog" was back and invited us to come up Monday and fight it out. He notified us to come armed, for if we did not it would be our fault.

We were on hand Monday ready for the fray, about twenty strong.

In the fight that ensued Will Turner was killed.

"Will" was indicted for his murder, but it was not known positively who did the killing. It was county court day and a big crowd was in town, besides the parties in the fight. After the fight I dropped out the feud and "Will" Howard took the leadership of the Howards. He is no kin to either my family or that of E. J. Howard, but is a good friend of both. He never forgets a friend or forgives a foe and has ever since been at war with the Turners.

From that time there has been fighting at intervals. The feud has been so bitter between the two families, and each side has grown in numbers, until nearly every family in the county is for either one side or the other.

The statement of George B. Turner, Sr., father of Bob, varies very widely from those of the other side. Mr. Turner has been a member of the legislature, is chairman of the democratic committee of Harlan county, is police judge of Harlan, editor of the local paper and is looked upon by all as one of the best citizens of the county. He says: "About sunset on March 7, 1882, Robert E. Lee Turner, then eighteen years old, walked out from supper at the Cumberland hotel, kept by S. C. Howard, in the town of Mount Pleasant, now called Harlan Court House, talking with some friends, when Wilkerson Howard came walking up the street with a musket on his shoulder. It was loaded with slugs, and Howard was considerably under the influence of liquor. He stopped, and stood for a moment, then, jerking his gun from his shoulder, without a word of warning shot Bob. When Bob saw Howard presenting his gun he made an attempt to draw his pistol, and as Howard's shot struck him he and I half drawn. As he fell Howard ran down the street. Bob raised himself and shot twice at Howard, striking him in the arm. Bob lived two days. James L. Howard, the present sheriff of Harlan county, and brother of Wilkerson, was with him and aided him by his presence. Wilkerson Howard made his escape from town and a lot of his relatives and friends gathered around him well armed and defied the law for a long time.

Afterward they came to town and went through the force of an examining trial. The elder Turner's statement goes on to give a lengthy account of the feuds, and condemn the juries for acquitting the Howards. He alleges that the fact that the Turners are democrats, and that Harlan county is overwhelmingly republican, is the cause of the feuds shown the Howards, who are republicans. Being democrats, he says, is to occupy a position that is looked upon by many of the more illiterate of the mountaineers as almost criminal and an unpardonable sin, although the better class of republicans rise above petty prejudices. While serving on a jury the illiterate ones, who number nine out of ten of the criminal juries, allow their political prejudices to rule them—

large majority of the jurors are devoid of even the rudiments of a common school education and are wholly unfit to decide a question where a man's life or the public safety is concerned. He then explains the killing of William Gilbert by Will Turner. This killing was in no manner connected with the Howard-Turner troubles. The difficulties can be summed up in no other way than cold blooded murders, without the slightest provocation, and generally from ambush. They stole the lives of my three sons. No Howard has ever been killed, why? Does any one say Turner has yet been confronted by his enemy in fair fight? None of those who have died saw the faces of their foes."

Crook on Desertions.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 1.—Gen. Crook, commanding the division of the Missouri, in his annual report gives prominence to the subject of desertions. He is of the opinion if soldiers could, after a reasonable term, sever their connection with the military service by the payment of the amount which the enlistment and service cost the government, it would go far toward preventing desertions. He suggests shortening the term of service.

Tracked by a Woman.

NILES, Mich., Nov. 1.—The requisition for the Benders arrived this afternoon and Deputy Sheriff Dick, of Parsons, Kas., took Mrs. Monroe and Mrs. Davis west. Mrs. McCann, the female detective who caused their arrest, accompanied them. She is a daughter of one of the Bender victims. The prisoners declare she is not in her right mind.

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